

family support groups, counseling, and community outreach and education. Not only does she continue to help aid families, but she successfully advocates for legislation to protect victims' rights.

Ms. Hawkins is a force to be reckoned with and a true champion for crime victims.

Suzanne Beaudoin is another bold woman who dedicated her life to serving crime victims. She was nominated for the Ed Stout Memorial Award by one of our newest VRC Members, Congressman MARK POCAN from Wisconsin. Like Ed Stout, Ms. Beaudoin has seen her work directly benefit survivors of crime.

Suzanne Beaudoin currently serves on the Wisconsin Crime Victims Council and has been the Director of the Victim Witness Unit of the Dane County District Attorney's Office for 20 years.

Throughout her years working in the Victim Witness Unit, she established ground-breaking programs in her community and advocated for critical victim legislation, including Wisconsin Victim's Rights Constitutional Amendment and the establishment of a local children's advocacy center. We are thankful for Ms. Beaudoin and those like her who guide victims through the criminal justice system and address the needs of survivors.

The work of these determined individuals never ceases to amaze me.

America is the greatest country in the world because of people like these.

And that's just the way it is.

SAMANTHA BENNETT

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Samantha Bennett for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Samantha Bennett is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Samantha Bennett is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Samantha Bennett for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VICKY HARTZLER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, May 20, 2013, I was unable to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on rollcall No. 161, "yea;" on rollcall No. 162, "yea;" on rollcall No. 163, "yea."

CONGRATULATING DR. DAVID J. VERDUGO, SUPERINTENDENT OF THE PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Dr. David J. Verdugo on his retirement after forty years as an educator. For the last eight years, Dr. Verdugo has served as the superintendent of the 16,000 student Paramount Unified School District. He will retire in June at the end of the current school year.

Before coming to the Paramount Unified School District, Superintendent Verdugo served at three uniquely different school districts: Spokane Public School District in the state of Washington, El Rancho Unified School District in Pico Rivera, California, and Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District, also in California. Dr. Verdugo has been a teacher, assistant principal, and principal, working with children grades K–12. He has also served as an assistant superintendent, where his responsibilities included school facility management, extensive involvement with budget development, implementation of technology programs, employer/employee relations, curriculum and instructional strategies and organizational development.

He is highly respected throughout the school district, the community and the education field. Dr. Verdugo is known for his strategic approach to major decisions, his communication with all stakeholders and his efforts to build a culture where individuals care about each other, resulting in a dramatic difference for students. His communications and work at Paramount Unified during the State's budget crisis resulted in everyone coming together so they could continue their efforts to benefit children, families and employees.

Dr. Verdugo has established a reputation as a leader focused on student learning and achievement. He possesses those critical skills essential to understanding and meeting the needs of students, staff, and parents. He is committed to excellence and believes that all students should be provided the highest quality of education in a safe and secure environment.

With experience serving students of diverse populations and socioeconomic levels in urban and suburban settings, Dr. Verdugo is a staunch supporter of strategic planning and believes strongly that it is essential to the success of any progressive school district.

As Superintendent, Dr. Verdugo has been instrumental in leading many of the school district's significant accomplishments, including dramatically increasing college and career pathways for students, fostering a resurgence of the arts, building new and transforming existing school facilities, and most importantly, raising the level of academic achievement of students to an all-time high.

Dr. Verdugo received his B.A. from Whitworth College in Spokane, Washington; his M.A. from La Verne University; and his Doctorate in Educational Administration from the University of Southern California. He was recognized as the 2008 ACSA Region 14 Superintendent of the Year. He also received the

California State University of Long Beach Superintendent Leadership Award for 2012 and was selected as a National Governing Board Member for the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). He currently serves as President of the highly respected Southern California Superintendents' Association.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking and congratulating Dr. David J. Verdugo for his many years of outstanding service to our community and our young people, and wish him many happy years of retirement.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE IMPRISONMENT OF BAHAI LEADERS IN IRAN

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, this month we mark the fifth anniversary of a terrible abuse of human rights in Iran.

Seven Baha'i leaders in Iran have been in prison for five years as of May 14, 2013. They are Mahvash Sabet, Fariba Kamalabadi, Jamaloddin Khanjani, Afif Naeimi, Saeid Rezaie, Behrouz Tavakkoli, and Vahid Tizfahm.

Tragically, there are many prisoners of conscience filling Iran's jails. Our Department of State's annual Human Rights Report documents case after case of violations of religious freedom. Indeed, in Iran, a climate of hostility surrounds all non-Shia religious communities. The Baha'i as well as Sunni Muslims, evangelical Christians, and Jews are victims of discrimination and persecution.

For all the victims of this persecution, and in particular for the seven Baha'i whose grim milestone we mark this month, it is critical that we raise our voices to send a message that they are not forgotten.

These seven leaders are all members of a national-level group—the "Yaran-i-Iran" or "Friends in Iran"—which oversaw the welfare of Iran's Baha'i community. Their 20-year prison term is the longest sentence of any current prisoners of conscience in Iran.

The seven were charged with espionage, propaganda against the Islamic republic, the establishment of an illegal administration, and corruption on earth. These are typical of the false charges and misinformation used to vilify Baha'is in Iran. The defendants rejected these charges completely and categorically. Their crime is being members of the Baha'i Faith, a religion which has been the focus of systematic, government-sponsored persecution in Iran since the 1979 revolution.

The trial of the seven leaders was also the trial of an entire community of more than 300,000. For the last 30 years, more than 200 Baha'is have been killed, hundreds more imprisoned, and thousands deprived of jobs, education, and the freedom to worship.

In an act of communal self-preservation, the Baha'is created an internal university called the Baha'i Institute of Higher Education to educate those denied entry to university. It was raided in 2011 and seven educators and administrators were sentenced to four or five years' imprisonment.

In addition, some 600 Baha'is have suffered arbitrary arrests since 2004. The number of Baha'is arrested and/or imprisoned has increased dramatically in the past two years. In January 2011, 56 were in prison and 230 were awaiting trial, appeal, or sentencing; currently, there are 110 in prison and 436 awaiting the other procedures.

Followers of the Baha'i Faith, founded in Iran in 1863, are regarded as infidels and have suffered persecution both before and after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Baha'i teachings emphasize the oneness of God, the unity of humankind, the underlying harmony of major religions, universal education, and the equality of women and men.

I support House Resolution 109 condemning the Iranian government for its persecution of its Baha'i minority. I call on my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join in co-sponsoring this resolution and my Senate colleagues in co-sponsoring Senate Resolution 75.

RAYANNA ROMERO

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Rayanna Romero for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Rayanna Romero is a 9th grader at Jefferson High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Rayanna Romero is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Rayanna Romero for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all of her future accomplishments.

HONORING SING FOR HOPE AND
THE SING FOR HOPE PIANOS
PROJECT

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the non-profit organization Sing for Hope, located in midtown Manhattan and dedicated to making the arts accessible to all. The Sing for Hope vision of "art for all" reflects their belief that the arts have the unique power to uplift, unite, and transform individuals and communities. They rely on the time and services donated by over 1,000 local New York City artists and performers who perform in schools, community centers and healthcare facilities. The mission of Sing for Hope is defined by the volunteer service of artists, and their belief in the transformative power of the arts.

The co-founding Directors of Sing for Hope, Camille Zamora and Monica Yunus, are internationally acclaimed opera singers who met as students at Juilliard. They established Sing for Hope in 2006 as a vehicle to encourage artists to give back to their communities. Since then, Sing for Hope has brought the magic of the arts to underserved communities throughout New York City and implemented a variety of outreach programs serving children, senior citizens, and people recovering from illness at healthcare facilities.

This summer marks the return of a very popular program created by Sing for Hope—"The Sing for Hope Pianos." Eighty-eight colorfully decorated pianos, which symbolize the 88 keys of a piano, are placed throughout New York City's public spaces in all five boroughs, for all members of the public to play and to enjoy. After the project ends, the pianos are then donated to underresourced schools and hospitals. "The Sing for Hope Pianos" are a striking embodiment of the role the arts play in our lives, and remind us that everyone should have access to treasured cultural resources. This year's return of "The Sing for Hope Pianos" has been made possible by the dedicated generosity of several entities: Chobani, Inc., a New York State-based company led by its President & CEO, Hamdi Ulukaya, as well as the Arnhold Foundation in honor of Sissy Arnhold, the Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Foundation, and the Bill and Ann Ziff Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking and congratulating Sing for Hope on this year's "Sing for Hope Pianos" project, as well as their ongoing dedication to volunteer service and community engagement, through encouraging greater access to the arts.

MS. LISA TATUM, J.D. ELECTED
FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN
PRESIDENT OF THE STATE BAR
OF TEXAS

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishment of Ms. Lisa Tatum, J.D. On June 21, 2013, Ms. Tatum will be sworn in as the 133rd President of the State Bar of Texas, and thereby become the first African American to hold that position. With exceptional dedication, Ms. Tatum has risen through the ranks of the legal profession to become one of the preeminent lawyers in the State of Texas.

Ms. Tatum grew up and still resides in San Antonio, TX, the product of an Air Force veteran father and a loving mother. In 1991, she received her Bachelor's degree from Smith College before going on to receive her Juris Doctor in 1994 from Santa Clara University Law School. Ms. Tatum quickly attained distinction in the legal profession, prosecuting over a hundred cases for Bexar County's Criminal District Attorney's Office before successfully transitioning to private practice. Eventually, Ms. Tatum established her own law firm, LM Tatum, PLLC, informally known as The Tatum Law Practice, in 2011. The

Tatum Law Practice primarily handles cases related to corporate, public finance, financial transaction, employment, and estate contingency planning law. In addition to her remarkable career accomplishments, Ms. Tatum is a Leadership San Antonio graduate, lifelong supporter of the YMCA, and a Rotarian.

Ms. Tatum's leadership has been consistently recognized by her colleagues: Ms. Tatum was honored with a Presidential Citation in 2006 and named a Texas Rising Star by SuperLawyers in 2007. She also served on the Board of Governors of the National Bar Association, City of San Antonio Housing Authority Commission, the San Antonio Water System Citizen Advisory Panel, and as President of the San Antonio Black Lawyers Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to pay tribute to Ms. Tatum, an accomplished lawyer and public servant. She is a determined and driven individual who will bring her diverse skills and life experience to the presidency of the State Bar of Texas.

RETIREMENT PLAN SIMPLIFICATION
AND ENHANCEMENT ACT
OF 2013

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 22, 2013

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to come before the House to reintroduce the Retirement Plan Simplification and Enhancement Act of 2013. Our current retirement plan rules are very complicated. My bill includes a number of common sense reforms that will simplify the rules while still protecting participants.

For example, under current law, small businesses that adopt a new retirement plan are eligible for a tax credit to cover some of their start-up costs. We're increasing the credit to \$5,000 to cover all of these expenses. I hope this will encourage more small employers to sponsor retirement plans.

Also, currently employers can exclude some part-time workers from participating in their 401(k) plans. As women are more likely than men to work part-time, these rules can be quite harmful for women in preparing for retirement. So my bill would require employers to allow certain long-term, part-time workers to make elective deferrals to their 401(k) plans.

My bill also reforms the Saver's Credit. The current Saver's Credit provides a tax incentive for families to save for retirement. However, because the Saver's Credit is currently non-refundable, it does not benefit those who need it most—low and moderate income households who have little or no federal income tax liability. Therefore, my bill would make the Saver's Credit refundable and also incentivize taxpayers to pay the credit into their retirement accounts.

The Retirement Plan Simplification and Enhancement Act also would establish a new automatic enrollment safe harbor. It was my legislation that established the existing safe harbor that promotes automatic enrollment in 401(k) plans. The power of inertia is a powerful tool. And automatically enrolling employees in 401(k)s unless they decide to opt out is a simple and effective way to harness this